



Proud of our Veterans,  
Proud of America!

# THE epicenter

Newsletter of the VA Palo Alto Health Care System (VAPAHCS) • April/May 2004

## The Madeline Antonicic Memorial Wall Dedicated!



On March 16<sup>th</sup> family members, VA officials, employees, volunteers and friends gathered at the Western Region Blind Rehabilitation Center to dedicate a memorial wall in honor of Madeline Antonicic.

Madeline Antonicic, VA Voluntary Service Representative for the American Legion Auxiliary passed away on July 29, 2003. Madeline was a leader in the VA Voluntary Service Program for many years.

She served on the VA Voluntary Service Committee and VA Voluntary Service Executive Committee for numerous years. Madeline logged over 48,000 volunteer hours and volunteered in a number of different assignments throughout the health care system. "When you look up the word volunteer in the dictionary, you'll find a picture of Madeline," said William Ball, Chief, Voluntary Service at the dedication ceremony.

The Memorial Wall was created to honor those volunteers who have made a direct impact on the lives of veterans in the Western Region Blind Center.



*Above, left: family members attend the dedication of the memorial wall; above, a family member touches the name of Madeline Antonicic, written in braille, on the memorial wall plaque.*

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# A Word From Our Director



**Elizabeth Joyce Freeman, Director  
VA Palo Alto Health Care System**

trator and behavioral health surveyors conducted their tracer visits over five full days. This was certainly the most comprehensive survey we have ever experienced and we again were accredited with very few areas of required follow up. Unlike past surveys, we did not receive a final score. The absence of a final score is part of JCAHO's emphasis on the need for continual readiness and continuous performance improvement. Given this survey occurred almost six months before the originally anticipated date of September 2004, we certainly have made great strides toward being in the continual readiness mode and will continue to do so. Our superb performance is also a testament to the outstanding care we provide to our veterans.

I very much appreciate the extraordinary efforts of all of you to contribute to our success in this survey. I especially want to thank Ms. Pat Allyn, Chief, Quality Management, and her staff for their superb management of the preparations for this new survey process. I also want to announce our preparations for Employee Appreciation Days at all sites to recognize and celebrate your hard work. Ms. Beth Hardison, Recreation Therapy Service, and a current member of the VISN 21/22 Leadership Development Institute, will be coordinat-

ing this effort. She will be working with the Site Liaisons at each site to coordinate appropriate days and times for these events.

We will be holding our Volunteer Recognition ceremonies this month to acknowledge and reward our stellar volunteers. We continue to lead most of VHA in our numbers of volunteers and hours and their monetary contributions. We have some very ambitious goals for increasing our numbers of volunteers this fiscal year. I know all of you are very appreciative of the terrific and truly invaluable assistance our volunteers provide each day. Please take some extra time to thank your volunteers this month. As I have said on numerous occasions, they are critically important to fulfilling our mission.

I want to be sure all employees are aware of outreach letters that are being sent from VA Secretary Principi to all returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. The letters contain brochures describing VA benefits for veterans and for National Guard and Reserve personnel. These letters may produce increased traffic in our enrollment and eligibility areas. We have made preparations for that increased activity. If you receive or have questions regarding veteran eligibility, please contact Eric Jacobson, Business Office, at extension 65804.

Finally, I want to again acknowledge the professionalism, expertise and dedication of our staff. Despite sensational news programs magnifying the mistakes that can and do occur in health care, you should all be proud of the service you are providing to our nation's veterans. I do want to encourage you to feel empowered to make suggestions for changes in your work areas or other areas within VAPAHCS. There is always room for improvement and with your help, we will continue to ensure our veterans receive the highest quality care.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elizabeth J. Freeman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "J" and "F".

Elizabeth Joyce Freeman  
Director

# Jonathan Perlin, MD, PhD, MSHA, FACP

## Acting Under Secretary for Health, Veterans Health Administration



Dr. Jonathan B. Perlin was appointed Acting Under Secretary for Health for the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) of the Department of Veterans Affairs effective April 6, 2004.

With an annual budget of more than \$25 billion, VHA is the nation's largest integrated health care system, employing more than 180,000 health care professionals and operating more than 1,300 sites of care, including hospitals, community and facility-based clinics, nursing homes, domiciliaries, readjustment counseling centers, and various other facilities. In addition to its medical care mission, the veterans health care system is the nation's largest provider of graduate medical education and a major contributor to medical and scientific research.

From 1999 to 2002, Dr. Perlin served as VHA's Chief Quality and Performance Officer. In this capacity, he was responsible for supporting quality improvement and performance management. VA is one of two agencies recognized in each of the past two years by Congress for managing for results. VHA's Quality and Performance program has been specifically recognized by the Innovations in American Government and the RIT-USA Today Quality Cup Programs.

Dr. Perlin's background includes health care quality management, medical education, health services research, and medical informatics. Prior to joining VHA, Dr. Perlin served as Medical

Director, Quality Improvement at the Medical College of Virginia Hospitals – Virginia Commonwealth University Health System. During that time, he also co-directed the Health Services Research Fellowship, served as Associate Director of the Residency Training Program in Internal Medicine, and directed Continuing Internal Medicine Education. Dr. Perlin is broadly published, maintains an academic appointment as Associate Professor of Medicine and Health Administration at Virginia Commonwealth University, and continues to see patients at the Washington D.C., VA Medical Center.

Dr. Perlin held previous appointments at the Richmond VA Medical Center, where he led in the development and implementation of the "Firm (group practice) System" and served as a "Firm" director. He was the first chief of the Telemedicine Section and developed an interstate network for providing clinical consultation as well as distributed education and administration.

Dr. Perlin is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, and has a Masters of Science in Health Administration. He received his Ph.D. in pharmacology with his M.D. as part of the Medical Scientist Training Program at Virginia Commonwealth University's Medical College of Virginia Campus.

# Nora Lynn Buluran Selected New Staff Assistant to the Director



Nora Lynn Buluran has been selected as the new Staff Assistant to the Director. Buluran will be responsible for a wide range of duties supporting Ms. Freeman.

Buluran joined VAPAHCS in July 2003 as a Health System Specialist for the Chief of Staff. Prior to working at VAPAHCS, she was a Public Health Analyst with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in Bethesda, Maryland for five years. At HRSA, Buluran worked on programs that improved health care access to the nation's underserved and vulnerable populations. In 2000, she received the HRSA Administrator's Distinguished Service Award for developing, implementing, and administering a new Federal grant program, the Community Access Program.

Buluran earned a Masters of Health Science degree in Health Policy and a Certificate in Health Finance and Management at the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health. She also has a Bachelors of Science degree in Physiology and a Minor in Japanese from the University of California at Davis.

# Eugene C. Butcher Co-Recipient of the Crafoord Prize



Eugene C. Butcher, M.D and Timothy A. Springer, Harvard Medical School, received the Crafoord Prize for their studies of the molecular mechanisms involved in migration of white blood cells in health and disease.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences Crafoord Prize was awarded to researchers who in a groundbreaking fashion have laid bare the mechanisms behind how white blood cells can leave the blood vessels and pen-

etrate the diseased tissue. Eugene Butcher has identified several important proteins, the selectins, which are located in the cell mem-

brane of white blood cells. These proteins bind specifically to carbohydrate chains on the surface of blood vessels and regulate blood cell movement towards the target. His colleague Timothy Springer has mapped a different group of adhesion molecules in the cell membrane of the blood cells, termed integrins. These consist of two classes of sub-unit which can combine in different ways to form proteins with different specific properties.

The mechanisms mapped by the prize-winners are also interesting subjects for medical treatment of diseases in which the white blood cells attack tissues, such as rheumatic disease or multiple sclerosis. Well-advanced treatment trials are in progress.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences is an independent organization whose overall objective is to foster the sciences, particularly mathematics and the natural sciences.



# EMPLOYEE NEWS

## New Employees

Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt.  
**Richard M. Patterson**

Anesthesia Svc.  
**Joseph Pukstas**  
**Ken Wu**

Medical Svc.  
**Lawrence Leung**

Nursing Svc.  
**Elsie Agustin**  
**Marie Galenas**  
**Derek Hudnall**  
**Jason Martin**  
**Monica Otero-Winegar**  
**Nhan Sage**

Police Svc.  
**Allan Fontanilla**  
**Johnny Gonzalez**

Psychology Svc.  
**Dorene Loew**

Radiology Svc.  
**Kimberly Lake**

Research Svc.  
**Shuo Chen**  
**Nigel Gladhart**  
**Helena Young**

## Retirees

**Marcelina Bell (38)**  
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt.

**Charmidivina Cruz (22)**  
Nursing Svc.

**Glenn Endsley (34)**  
Voluntary Svc.

**Carol R. Hendricks (38)**  
Medical Svc.

**Elaine Hill (39)**  
Recreation Svc.

**Sandra Levas (34)**  
Nursing Svc.

**Florinda Lopez (37)**  
Nursing Svc.

**Doris Millar (25)**  
Business Office

**M. Colene Petersen (19)**  
Dental Svc.

**Eddye Robinson (40)**  
Nursing Svc.

**Norma Ruiz (38)**  
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt.

**Judy Schroeder (42)**  
IRMS

**Walter White (32)**  
Engineering Svc.

*(Years of service are indicated in parentheses.)*

## Employee Service Awards

### 10 Years

**Christine Camp**  
Nursing Svc.  
**Scott Crawford**  
Nursing Svc.  
**Jerry Duncan**  
Recreation Svc.  
**Glenna Francisco**  
Nursing Svc.  
**Jerome Green**  
Environmental Mgmt. Svc.  
**Shelli Koszdzin**  
Pharmacy Svc.  
**Linda Mitchell**  
Audiology & Speech Path.  
**Rosario Semilla**  
Nursing Svc.  
**Christian Stetz**  
Medical Svc.  
**Sarbjeet Toor**  
Pharmacy Svc.  
**Jeffrey Woods**  
Nutrition & Food Svc.

### 15 Years

**Alice Alilin**  
Nursing Svc.  
**Tomas Bunoan**  
Nursing Svc.  
**Curtis Damert**  
Business Office

**Robert Fowlie**  
Nursing Svc.

**Starr Heinemann**  
Chief of Staff

**Beth Hiseler**  
Radiology Svc.

**Kim Larkworthy**  
Nursing Svc.

**Andrew Leland**  
Chief of Staff

**Jen-Shi Liu**  
Nursing Svc.

**Benilyn Martin-Salinas**  
Nursing Svc.

**Mark Mitchell**  
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt. Svc.

**Annie Perumattam**  
Nursing Svc.

**Val Putnam**  
Chief of Staff

**Rodolfo Reyes**  
Nursing Svc.

**Susn Sanfilippo**  
Psychiatry Svc.

**Lillie Ward**  
Nursing Svc.

**Teresita Zurbano**  
Nursing Svc.

### 20 Years

**George Abrenilla**  
Nursing Svc.

**Jamil Bashir**  
Domiciliary Svc.

**Gary Beaupre**  
Research Svc.

**Natividad Beckner**  
Nursing Svc.

**Elizabeth Cachola**  
Fiscal Svc.

**Joselito Cruz**  
IRMS

**Sheri Fihn**  
Medical Svc.

**Sandra Johnston**  
Nutrition & Food Svc.

**Bruce Nothstein**  
Environmental Mgmt. Svc.

**Helen Ostruske**  
Social Work Svc.

**Sheryl Stanger**  
Medical Svc.

**Bridget Stevison**  
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt. Svc.

### 25 Years

**Walter Avery**  
Engineering Svc.

**Leticia Bernales**  
Nursing Svc.

**Vickie Blackburn**  
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt. Svc.

**Marilyn Burton**  
Nursing Svc.

**Dorothy Jones**  
Nursing Svc.

**Betty Kim**  
Nursing Svc.

### 30 Years

**Arminta Armstrong**  
Nursing Svc.

**Myrna Avila-Musni**  
Nursing Svc.

**Albert Chen**  
Medical Svc.

**Ronald Chiles**  
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt. Svc.

**William Hollingsworth**  
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt. Svc.

**Ethel Jackson**  
Nursing Svc.

**Jaren Jackson**  
Nursing Svc.

**David Jaffe**  
Research Svc.

### 35 Years

**Richard Morel**  
Engineering Svc.

**Jewell Patton**  
Nursing Svc.

**Judith Thielen**  
Ambulatory Care

### 40 Years

**Earl Turner**  
Engineering Svc.

# Memorial Day

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service. There are many stories as to its actual beginnings, with over two dozen cities and towns laying claim to being the birthplace of Memorial Day. There is also evidence that organized women's groups in the South were decorating graves before the end of the Civil War: a hymn published in 1867, "Kneel Where Our Loves are Sleeping" by Nella L. Sweet carried the dedication "To The Ladies of the South who are Decorating the Graves of the Confederate Dead" (Source: Duke University's Historic American Sheet Music, 1850-1920.) While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. It is more likely that it had many separate beginnings.

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11, and was first observed on 30 May 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war). It is now celebrated in almost every State on the last Monday in May (passed by Congress with the National Holiday Act, P.L. 90 - 363, in 1971 to ensure a three day weekend for Federal holidays), though several southern states have an additional separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead: January 19 in Texas, April 26 in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi; May 10 in South Carolina; and June 3 (Jefferson Davis' birthday) in Louisiana and Tennessee.

In 1915, inspired by the poem "In Flanders Fields," Moina Michael replied with her own poem:

**We cherish too, the Poppy red  
That grows on fields where valor led,  
It seems to signal to the skies  
That blood of heroes never dies**

She then conceived of an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war. She was the first to wear one, and sold poppies to her friends and co-workers with the money going to benefit servicemen in need. Later a Madam Guerin from France was visiting the United States and learned of this new custom started by Ms. Michael and when she returned to France, made artificial red poppies to raise money for war orphaned

children and widowed women. This tradition spread to other countries. In 1921, the Franco-American Children's League sold poppies nationally to benefit war orphans of France and Belgium. The League disbanded a year later and Madam Guerin approached the VFW for help. Shortly before Memorial Day in 1922 the VFW became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies. Two years later their "Buddy" Poppy program was selling artificial poppies made by disabled veterans. In 1948 the US Post Office honored Ms. Michael for her role in founding the National Poppy movement by issuing a red 3-cent postage stamp with her likeness on it.

Since the late 50's on the Thursday before Memorial Day, the 1,200 soldiers of the 3d U.S. Infantry place small American flags at each of the more than 260,000 gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery. They then patrol 24 hours a day during the weekend to ensure that each flag remains standing.

And since 1998, on the Saturday before the observed day for Memorial Day, the Boys Scouts and Girl Scouts place a candle at each of approximately 15,300 grave sites of soldiers buried at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park on Marye's Heights (the Luminaria Program).

## **In Flanders Fields**

*John McCrae, 1915*

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.  
We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

# National Police Week

## May 9 - 15, 2004

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy signed Public Law 87-726 designating May 15 as Peace Officers' Memorial Day, and the week in which May 15 falls as National Police Week. The law was amended by the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, Public Law 103-322, signed by President Bill Clinton, directing

that the flag of the United States be displayed at half-staff on all government buildings on May 15 each year. While the actual dates change from year to year, National Police Week is always the calendar week, beginning on Sunday, which includes May 15.

### VAPAHCS Police Service





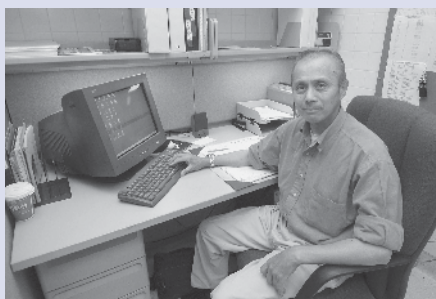
# Environmental Management Service

## National Linen Week

### April 26-30, 2004

The Linen Department, a part of the Environmental Management Service, is responsible for the daily supply of linen for VAPAHCS at Livermore, Menlo Park and Palo Alto. Additionally, the Linen Department is responsible for the re-supply and pick up of linen for the outlying clinics at Monterey, San Jose and Modesto. An average of 181, 865 pounds and 178,000 pieces of linen are processed monthly for all the divisions and clinics. Linen provided consists of sheets (flat and fitted), pillowcases, bath towels, wash cloths, surgical bed sheets, surgical scrubs and hand towels, dish towels, aprons, pajamas, bath robes, patient gowns,

warm-up blankets, isolation gowns, mops, laundry bags, lab coats and tablecloths. The daily support provided to VAPAHCS is provided by six linen handlers, three patient effects clerks, one uniform specialist, and two supervisory staff. Linen is processed on a daily basis by a contract laundry located in Turlock, California. Linen is picked up in the early morning each day, processed late in the afternoon, and delivered the following day. In addition to the linen, the department is responsible for providing uniforms for all the hospital staff including dietetic personnel, Environmental Management, warehouse, Engineering, Nursing, SPD, and Pharmacy.



*Clockwise from upper left: Barbara Odum-Newberry, Uniform Clerk; Michael Perry, Linen Handler; Leo Pasco, Supervisor; Charlotte Roberson, Patient Effects Clerk.*



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Due to space limitations, it is not  
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We welcome any comments,  
suggestions or story ideas  
you may have; please contact the  
Communications Officer (00A) at  
ext. 64888 or directly at  
650-858-3925.

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